Louisiana Regional HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report

Characteristics and Trends of Reported HIV and AIDS Cases

2001

Region V: Lake Charles Region

HIV/AIDS Surveillance
HIV/AIDS Program
Louisiana Office of Public Health
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals
234 Loyola Ave, 5th Floor
New Orleans, LA 70112
(504) 568-7474

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Regional Epidemiologic Profile

Region V: Lake Charles Region

This profile summarizes the status of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Lake Charles region for cases diagnosed through 2001 and reported through May, 2002. Please refer to the technical notes (page 16) for information on the interpretation of HIV data.

The following are highlights of this year's report for Region V:

- In 2001, the Lake Charles region had the 5th highest HIV/AIDS rate in the state (17 cases out of every 100,000 persons).

- Through 2001, the cumulative number of persons detected and reported with HIV infection was 859 in Region V. Also through 2001, 528 persons have been diagnosed with AIDS in Region V. In 2001 alone, 48 new cases of HIV infection were detected and 34 new AIDS cases were diagnosed.

- By the end of 2001, there were 671 persons living with HIV/AIDS in Region V. The number of persons living with HIV/AIDS continues to increase each year.

- In 2001, 58% of the newly-diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases in the region were African-American. Consistent with all 9 regions in the state, African-American men had the highest HIV/AIDS rate in the Lake Charles region. Forty-three out of every 100,000 African-American men in Region V were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 2001.

- Women continue to represent an increasing proportion of newly-diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases statewide. For the first time since 1997, Region V has had a decrease in the proportion of women newly-diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. In 2001, the proportion of HIV/AIDS cases in women in the Lake Charles region was 25%, compared to 34% in 2000.

- All of the regions, except for Region III, had an increase in AIDS cases in 2001.

- Although the number of new HIV/AIDS cases attributed to men who have sex with men (MSM) has been decreasing throughout the state, the epidemic in MSM remains the largest of all transmission groups in Louisiana. Statewide in 2001, 43% of all cases with a specified risk were attributed to MSM exposure; in the Lake Charles region, 56% of all HIV/AIDS cases, for which a risk was specified, occurred among MSM.

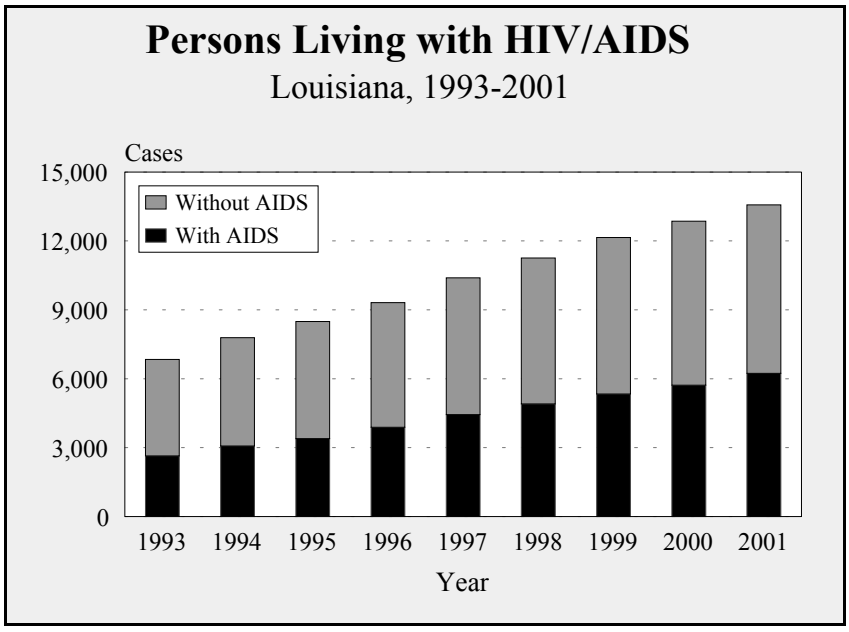
- Statewide, 151 HIV-infected women gave birth during 2001, 13 of these women resided in Regions III, IV, and V. While 94% of the HIV-infected women giving birth statewide received AZT in 2001, 100% of HIV-infected pregnant women received AZT in Regions III, IV, and V.

As the HIV/AIDS epidemic continues in persons at high risk and expands in persons who may not recognize their risk (e.g. women, sexual partners of persons at high risk), health care providers can play an important role in preventing HIV/AIDS. Physicians, nurses, and other health care workers should talk to every patient about his/her sexual behavior and recommend specific steps to decrease risky behavior, including reducing the number of sexual partners and using condoms routinely. As AIDS is still an incurable disease, the few minutes spent in this counseling can save more lives than all medical interventions that are available.

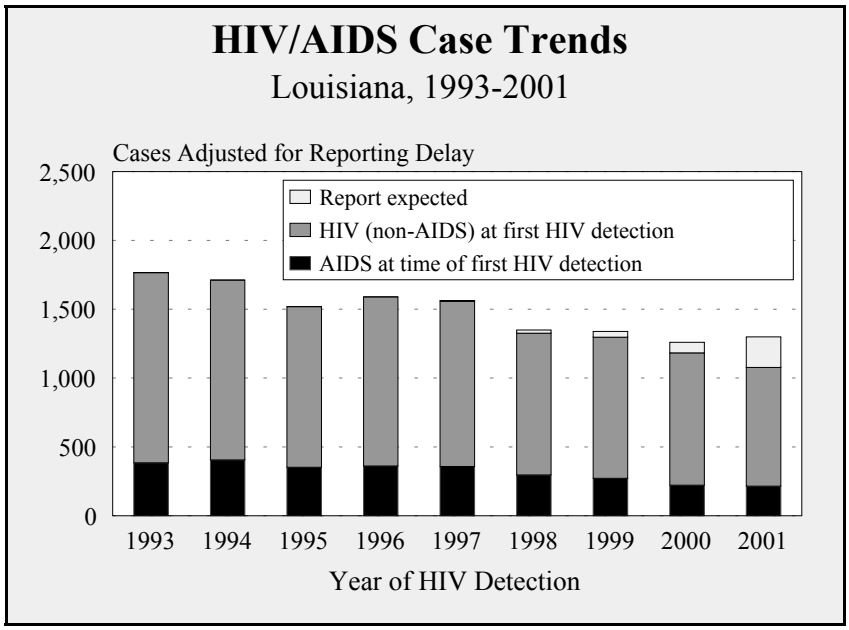
STATEWIDE

Public Health Regions

Region	Area	Parishes
I	New Orleans	Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard
II	Baton Rouge	Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Ponte Coupee, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana
III	Houma	Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary, Terrebone
IV	Lafayette	Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, Vermillion
V	Lake Charles	Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis
VI	Alexandria	Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, La Salle, Rapides, Vernon, Winn
VII	Shreveport	Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, De Soto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, Webster
VIII	Monroe	Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll
IX	Hammond/Slidell	Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington

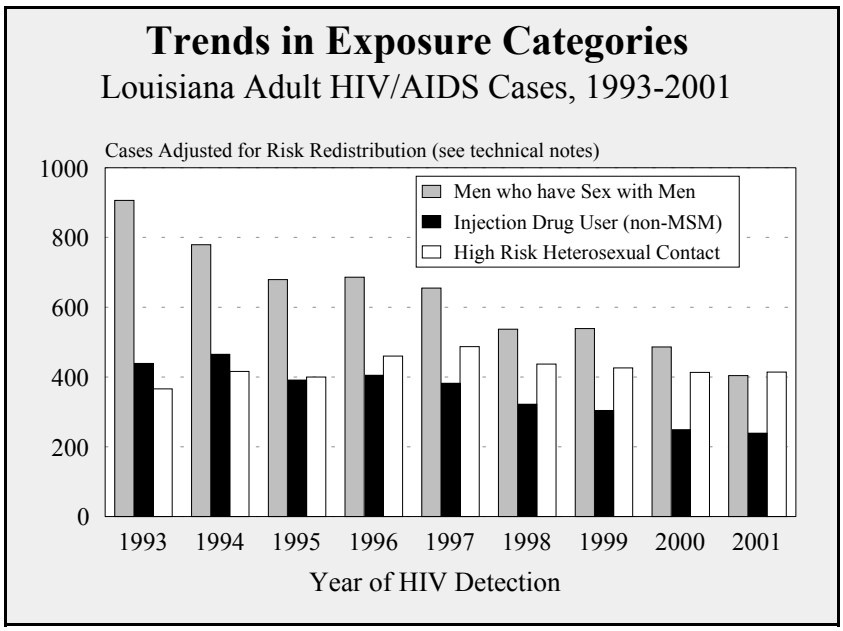


- The number of persons living with HIV continues to increase each year. At the end of 2001, 13,565 persons were known to be living with HIV/AIDS in Louisiana, of whom 6,236 (46%) had progressed to AIDS. This trend is largely due to the introduction of effective drug treatment and therapies, which delay the progression from HIV to AIDS and AIDS to death.



- In 2001, 1,078 new HIV/AIDS cases were detected statewide. Since 1993, the number of newly-detected HIV/AIDS cases has decreased by over a third, from 1,766 cases detected in 1993 to 1,078 cases detected in 2001.

- Of the newly detected cases in 2001, 22% were diagnosed with AIDS at the time of first HIV-detection.



- The largest proportion of cases detected in 2001 (38%) were attributed to "Heterosexual contact," after adjusting for unreported risk.

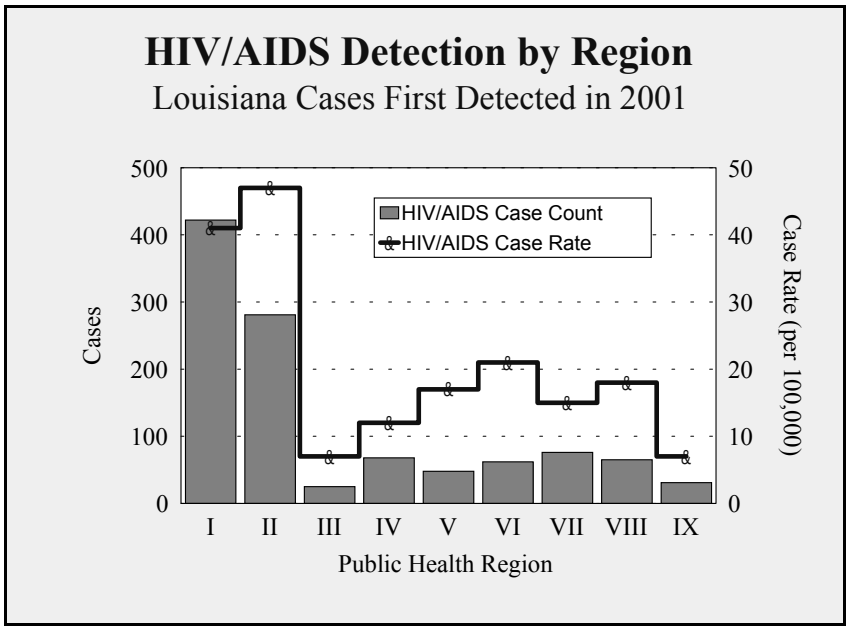
- Cases among MSM, including MSM/IDU accounted for 37% of all cases detected in 2001; however nearly half of all persons living with HIV in Louisiana (48%) may have been exposed to the virus through male-male sexual contact.

Louisiana HIV/AIDS Cases and Case Rates by Parish

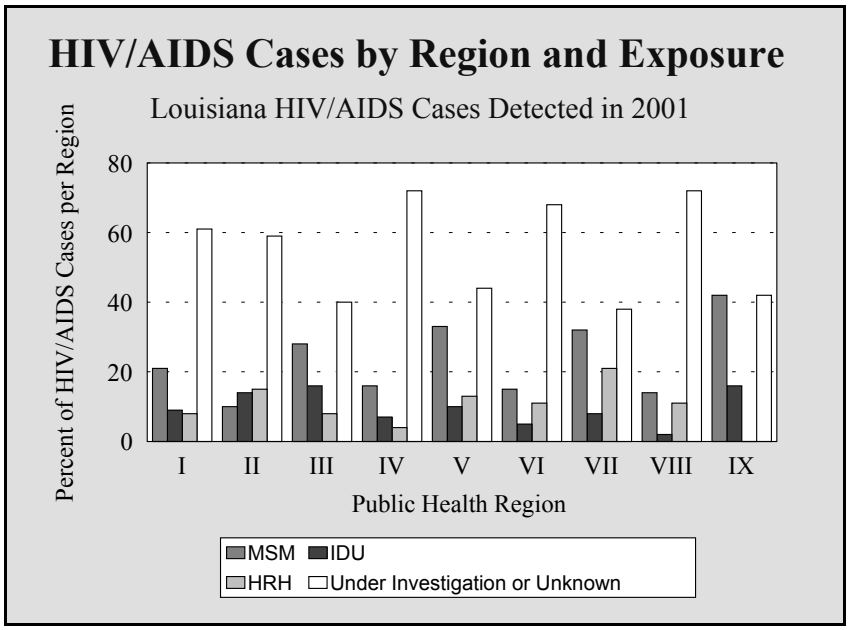
PARISH	AIDS DX[a] in 2001	HIV/AIDS Detected in 2001	HIV/AIDS Detection Rate, 2001[b]	Cum HIV/AIDS Cases[c]
Statewide	**858**	**1,078**	**24**	**21,584**
Region I	**343**	**422**	**41**	**10,604**
Jefferson	68	93	20	1,844
Orleans	271	321	66	8,563
Plaquemines	0	2	n/a	42
St. Bernard	4	6	9	155
Region II	**237**	**281**	**47**	**4,228**
Ascension	9	14	18	148
East Baton Rouge	185	230	56	3,371
East Feliciana	10	9	42	117
Iberville	14	15	45	231
Pointe Coupee	5	3	n/a	59
West Baton Rouge	4	6	28	115
West Feliciana	10	4	n/a	187
Region III	**27**	**25**	**7**	**644**
Assumption	0	0	n/a	29
LaFourche	4	3	n/a	101
St. Charles	2	2	n/a	92
St. James	3	0	n/a	57
St. John the Baptist	2	3	n/a	84
St. Mary	3	4	n/a	94
Terrebone	13	13	12	187
Region IV	**49**	**68**	**12**	**1,281**
Acadia	8	9	15	104
Evangeline	3	4	n/a	46
Iberia	6	9	12	109
Lafayette	14	20	10	639
St. Landry	14	14	16	211
St. Martin	2	8	16	87
Vermilion	2	4	n/a	85
Region V	**34**	**48**	**17**	**859**
Allen	4	2	n/a	141
Beauregard	3	3	n/a	60
Calcasieu	23	39	21	595
Cameron	1	1	n/a	8
Jefferson Davis	3	3	n/a	55

PARISH	AIDS DX[a] in 2001	HIV /AIDS Detected in 2001	HIV/AIDS Detection Rate, 2001[b]	Cum HIV/AIDS Cases[c]
Region VI	**35**	**62**	**21**	**881**
Avoyelles	6	10	24	193
Catahoula	2	4	n/a	22
Concordia	2	3	n/a	43
Grant	3	6	32	30
La Salle	0	1	n/a	7
Rapides	17	33	26	444
Vernon	2	3	n/a	72
Winn	3	2	n/a	70
Region VII	**56**	**76**	**15**	**1,285**
Bienville	0	2	n/a	18
Bossier	6	6	6	132
Caddo	34	53	21	885
Claiborne	6	2	n/a	58
De Soto	4	6	24	34
Natchitoches	2	4	n/a	80
Red River	0	0	n/a	9
Sabine	1	1	n/a	23
Webster	3	2	n/a	46
Region VIII	**51**	**65**	**18**	**946**
Caldwell	1	1	n/a	16
East Carroll	5	9	96	36
Franklin	0	0	n/a	22
Jackson	1	0	n/a	16
Lincoln	1	1	n/a	67
Madison	4	7	51	63
Morehouse	3	1	n/a	60
Ouachita	30	35	24	534
Richland	4	7	33	52
Tensas	1	2	n/a	29
Union	1	0	n/a	33
West Carroll	0	2	n/a	18
Region IX	**26**	**31**	**7**	**856**
Livingston	4	7	8	123
St. Helena	0	0	n/a	10
St. Tammany	9	10	5	353
Tangipahoa	6	10	10	190
Washington	7	4	n/a	180

[a] DX—Diagnosed with AIDS. AIDS diagnoses will be included in counts of HIV/AIDS detection (2nd column) for persons first detected with HIV at an AIDS diagnosis; therefore numbers from the two columns should not be added.
[b] Rates per 100,000 persons in parish. Rates are unstable and not available (n/a) for parishes with low case counts.
[c] Cumulative HIV/AIDS may be interpreted as minimum number of cases reported in parish.



- The New Orleans region had the highest number of HIV/AIDS cases detected in 2001 and the Baton Rouge region had the highest HIV/AIDS detection rates (number of cases per population in the region) Region V had the 5th highest rate and 7th highest number of cases in 2001.

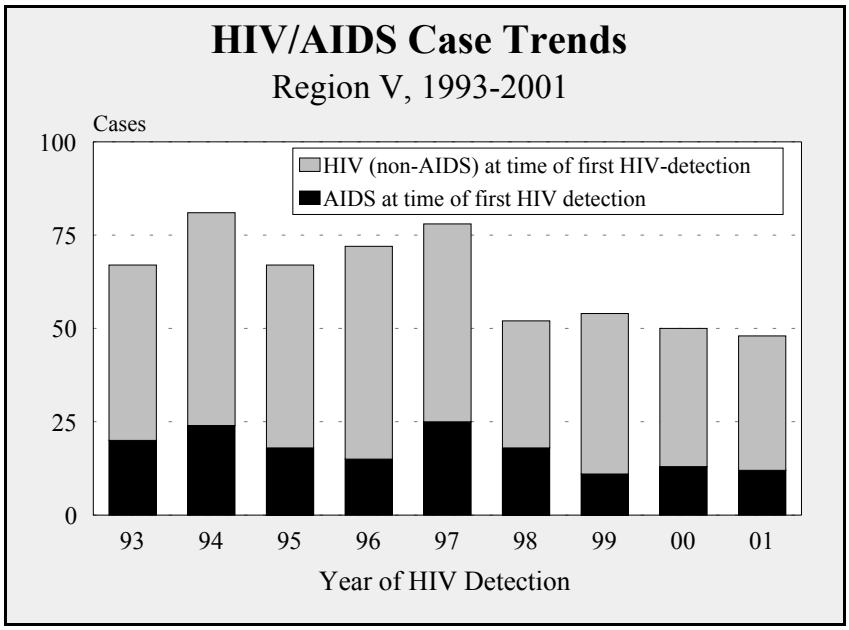


- In Region V, which is similar to the Baton Rouge region, the largest proportion of newly-detected cases in 2001, with an identified exposure, were attributed to MSM exposure. In the Baton Rouge region, both injection drug use and high-risk heterosexual contact accounted for larger percentages of the newly-detected cases than did male-male sexual contact.

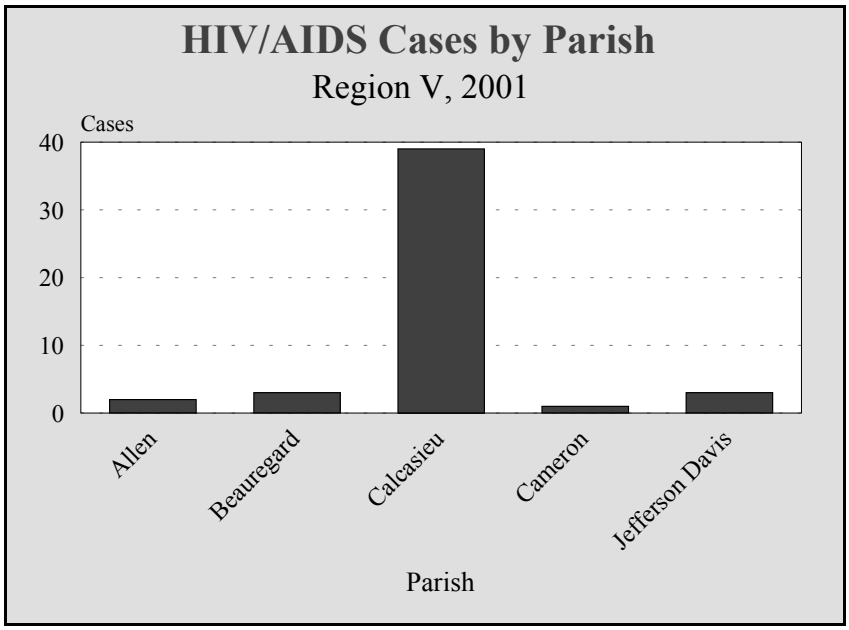
Characteristics of HIV-Infected Persons (HIV/AIDS)[a]
Region V: Lake Charles

	Persons with HIV/AIDS First Detected in 2001				Persons Living with HIV/AIDS	
	These columns reflect persons with HIV infection (HIV/AIDS) whose positive status was first detected in 2001 through confidential testing. Some of these persons may have been diagnosed with AIDS at the time HIV was first detected; therefore, this column does not reflect new cases of HIV infection but rather new cases of HIV detection.				*This column reflects the minimum number of persons living with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2001. This column includes persons living with AIDS.*	
	Statewide		Region V			
	Cases	**Percent[b]**	**Cases**	**Percent[b]**	**Cases**	**Percent[b]**
TOTAL	1,078	100%	48	100%	671	100%
Gender						
Men	689	64%	36	75%	535	80%
Women	389	36%	12	25%	136	20%
Ethnicity						
African-American	796	74%	28	58%	380	57%
White	243	23%	19	40%	237	35%
Other	33	3%	1	2%	54	8%
Unknown	6	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Age Group	**Age at HIV Detection**		**Age at HIV Detection**		**Age at End of 2001**	
Under 13	10	1%	0	0%	5	1%
13-24	219	20%	11	23%	42	6%
25-34	285	26%	14	29%	174	26%
35-44	316	29%	12	25%	315	47%
Over 44	248	23%	11	23%	135	20%
Exposure Group[c]						
MSM[d]	189	43%	15	56%	198	41%
IDU[d]	107	24%	5	19%	111	23%
MSM and IDU	14	3%	1	4%	70	15%
HRH[d]	121	27%	6	22%	92	19%
Trans/Hemo	2	1%	0	0%	4	1%
Perinatal	10	2%	0	0%	5	1%
Unspecified[e]	*635*	*59%*	*21*	*44%*	*191*	*28%*
Urban/Rural Parishes						
Urban	929	86%	39	81%	422	63%
Rural	149	14%	9	19%	249	37%

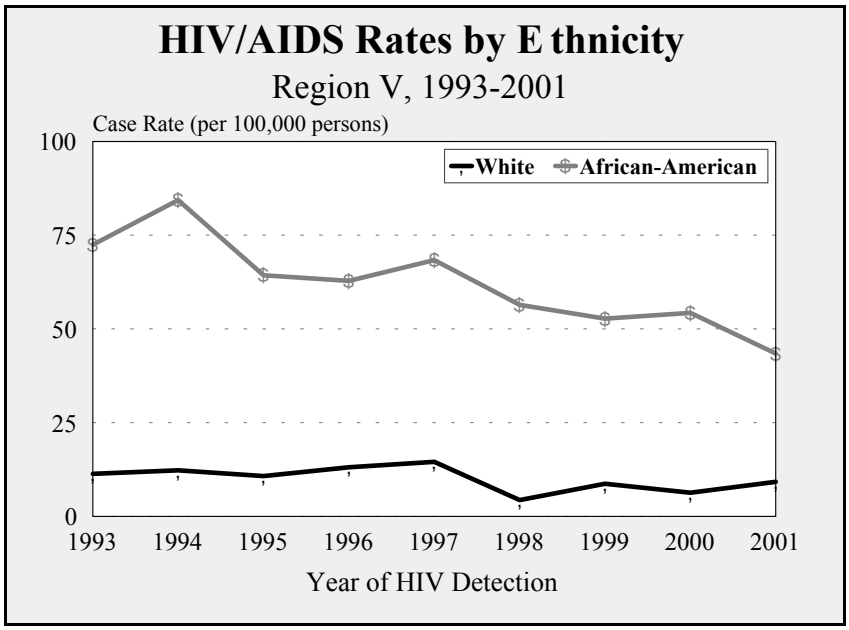
[a] HIV data collection started in 1993. Positive results of anonymous tests are not included due to the likelihood of repeated tests.
[b] Percentages might not add up to 100% due to missing values and rounding errors.
[c] Percents for identified exposure groups represent the distribution among those with a specified exposure.
[d] MSM: Men who have Sex with Men (non-IDU); IDU: Injection Drug Users; HRH: High-Risk Heterosexual.
[e] Unspecified Exposure refers to cases whose exposure group is under investigation or unknown.



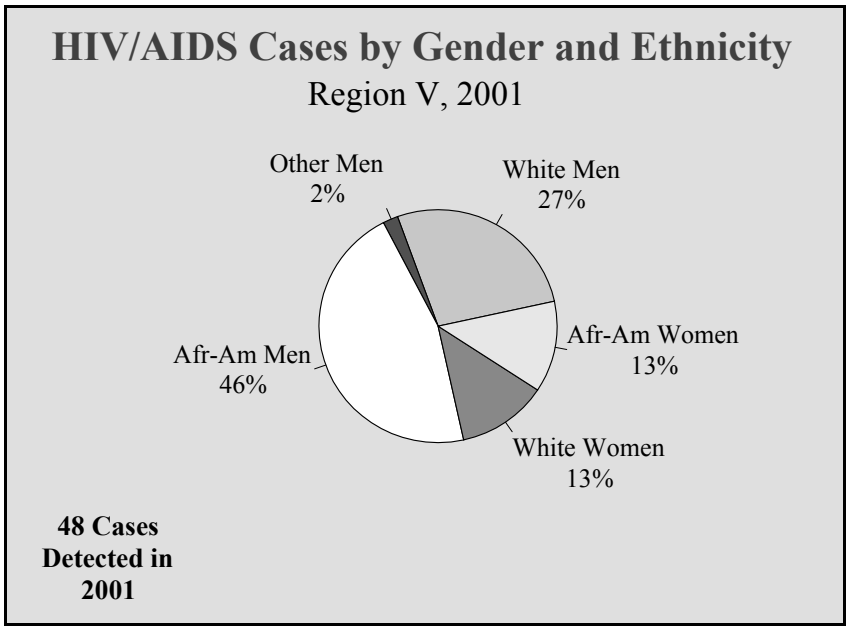
- From 1998 to 2001, the number of newly-detected cases in Region V has remained relatively stable. Of the persons who were detected with HIV in Region V in 2001, 25% were diagnosed with AIDS at the time of first HIV detection.



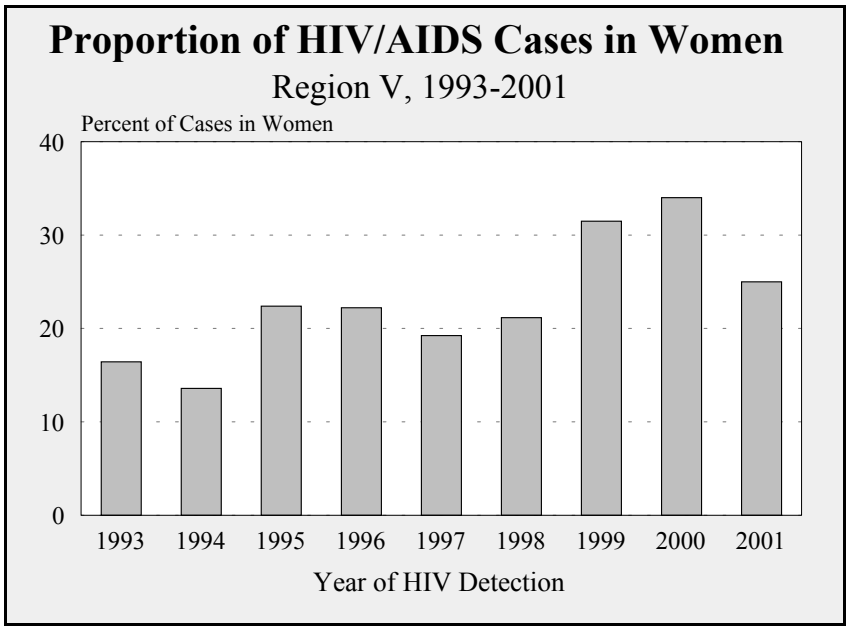
- Of all the parishes in Region V, Calcasieu parish had the highest number of newly-detected cases in 2001. Thirty-nine of the 48 cases detected in Region V in 2001 were detected among persons living in Calcasieu parish.



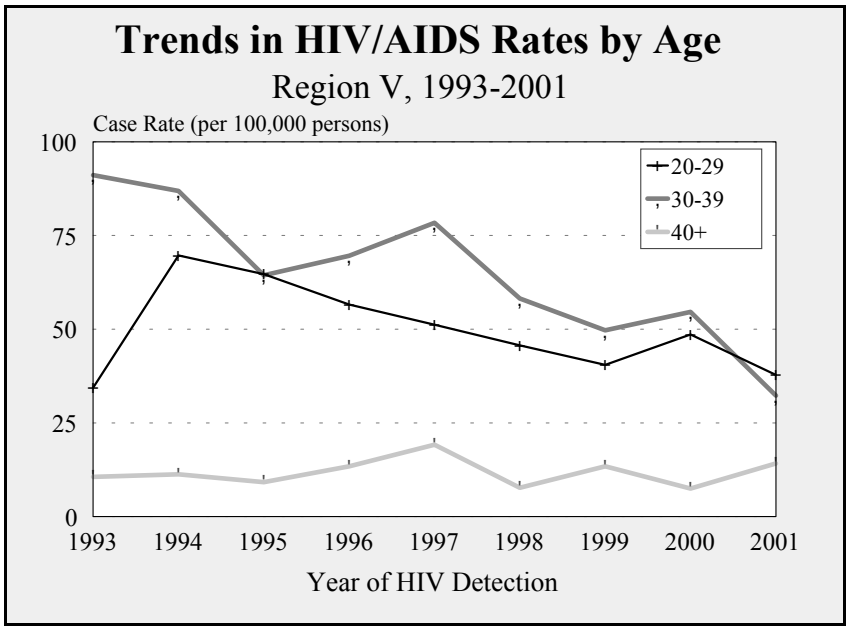
- From 1993 to 2001 rates in African-American were consistently higher than rates in whites and were decreasing during this time period. Year-to-year differences should be interpreted with caution due to small sample sizes.



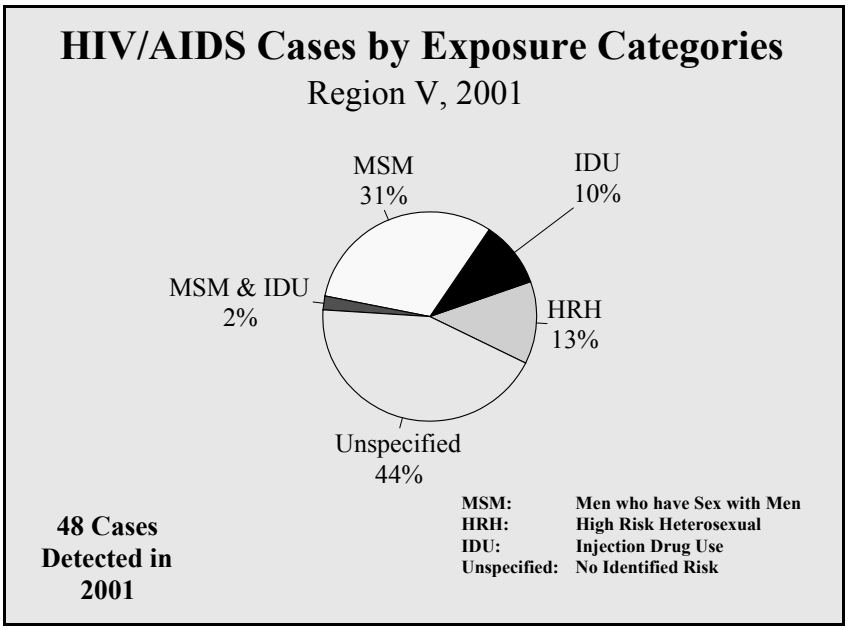
- Forty-six percent (46%) of newly-detected cases in 2001 were among African-American men compared to 27% among white men.



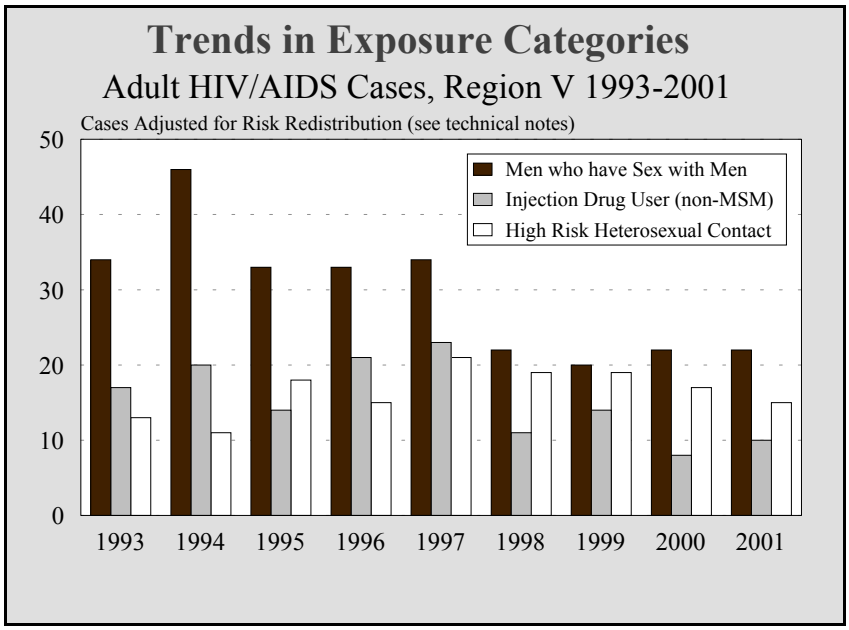
- From 2000 to 2001, there was a decrease in the percent of new cases among women in Region V. Twenty-five percent (25%) of newly-detected cases in 2001, in Region V, were among women, compared to 34% in 2000. Statewide in 2001, 36% of newly-detected cases were among women.



- In 2001, the rate of newly-detected cases in persons 20 to 29 years of age surpassed that of persons 30 to 39 years of age. However the detection rate among both groups has decreased over time.



- In 2001, 44% of cases detected in Region V were reported without any mode of exposure. Statewide in 2001, 59% of newly-detected cases were reported without any mode of exposure.



- After adjusting for unreported risk, the largest proportion of cases detected in 2001 (47%), in Region V, were attributed to men who have sex with men.

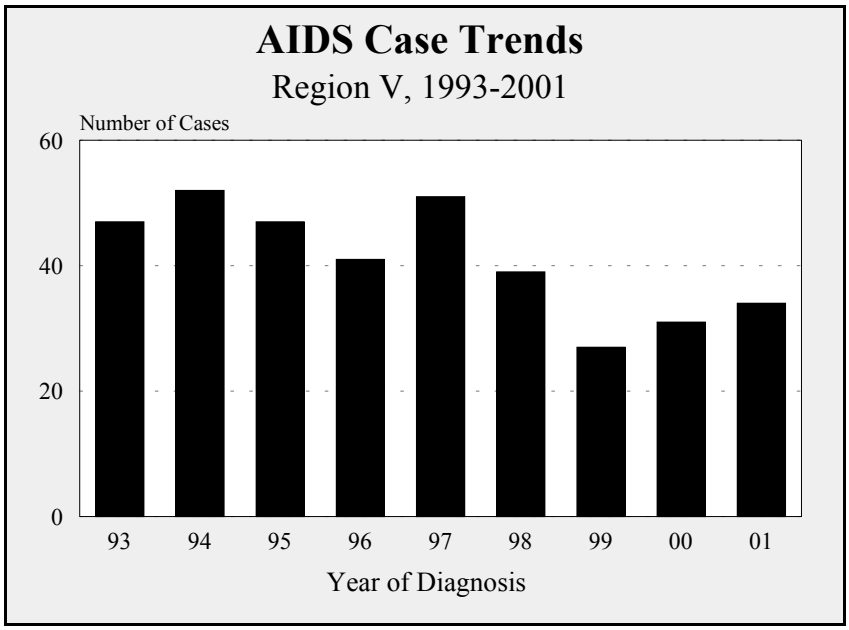
Characteristics of AIDS Cases
Region V: Lake Charles Region

	AIDS Cases Diagnosed in 2001		Cumulative AIDS Cases	
	Cases	Percent[a]	Cases	Percent[a]
TOTAL	34	100%	528	100%
Gender				
Men	30	88%	466	88%
Women	4	12%	62	12%
Age Group				
Under 13	0	0%	3	1%
13-24	2	6%	41	8%
25-34	10	29%	233	44%
35-44	11	32%	173	33%
45+	11	32%	78	15%
Ethnicity[b]				
African-American	23	68%	261	49%
White	11	32%	244	46%
Hispanic	0	0%	19	4%
Other	0	0%	4	1%
Ethnicity[b] and Gender				
Af-Am Men	20	59%	219	41%
White Men	10	29%	225	43%
Hispanic Men	0	0%	19	4%
Other Men	0	0%	3	1%
Af-Am Women	3	9%	42	8%
White Women	1	3%	19	4%
Hispanic Women	0	0%	0	0%
Other Women	0	0%	1	<1%
Exposure Category[c]				
MSM	12	57%	230	53%
IDU	3	14%	84	19%
MSM and IDU	3	14%	57	13%
HRH	3	14%	47	11%
Trans/Hemo	0	0%	14	3%
Perinatal	0	0%	3	<1%
Unspecified	*13*	*38%*	*93*	*18%*
Urban/Rural Parishes				
Urban	23	68%	362	69%
Rural	11	32%	166	31%
Facility Type				
Public	24	73%	329	63%
Private	9	27%	191	37%

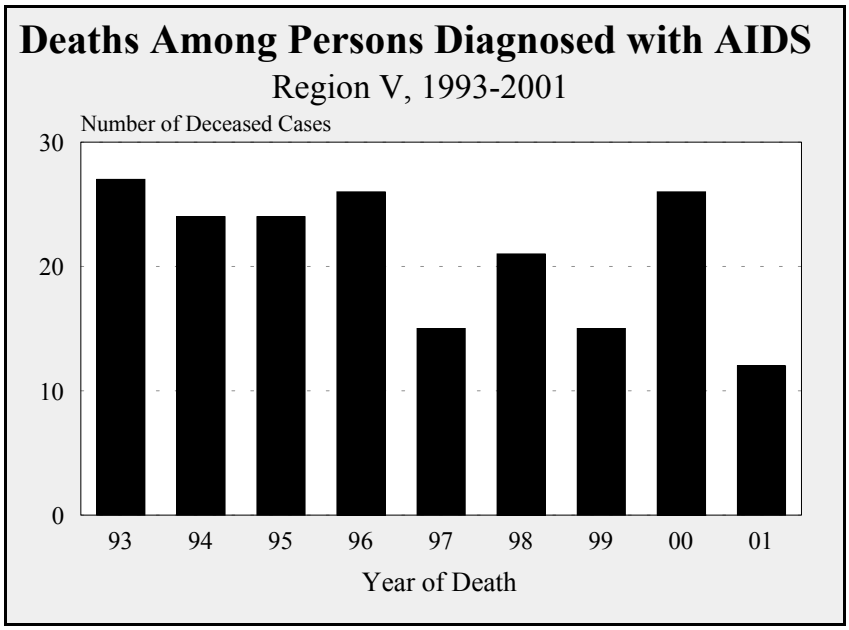
[a] Percentages might not add up to 100% due to missing values and rounding errors.

[b] Cases and rates by ethnicity do not include cases whose race/ethnicity is unknown.

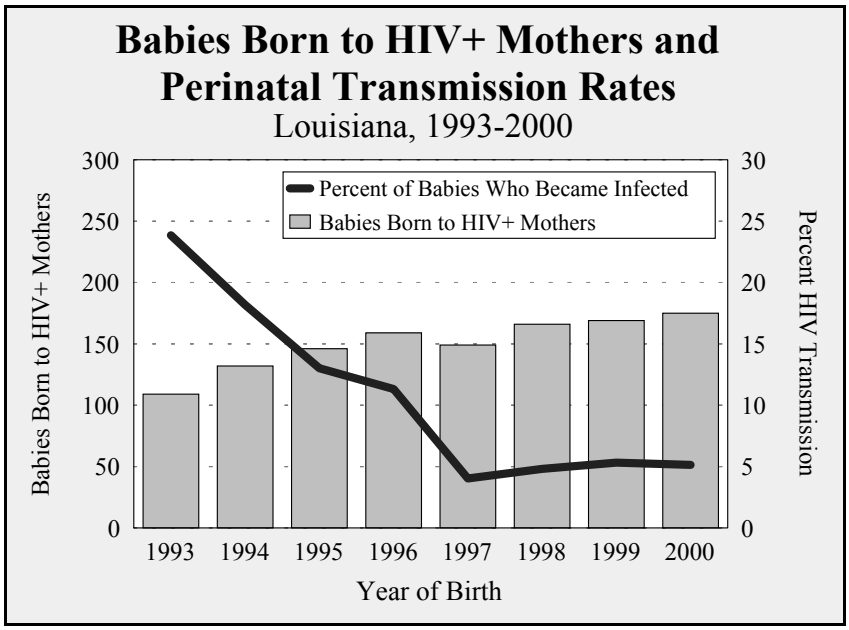
[c] MSM = Men who have Sex with Men; IDU = Injection Drug User; HRH = High-Risk Heterosexual; Unspecified = Still under investigation or unknown. See technical notes for further explanation.



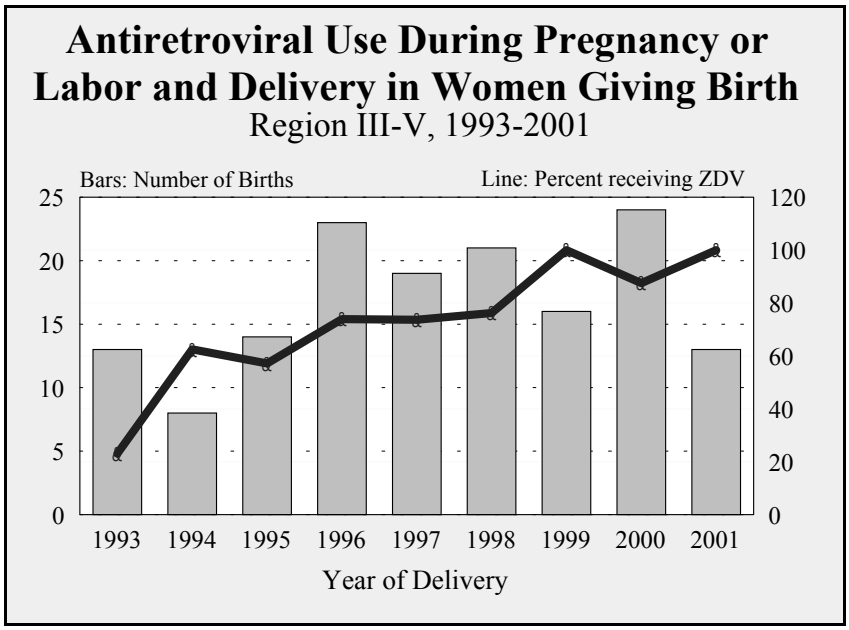
- From 1999 to 2001, in Region V, there was an increase in the number of new AIDS cases.



- From 2000 to 2001, there was a decrease in the number of deaths among persons diagnosed with AIDS in Region V. Deaths among persons diagnosed with AIDS in Region V represent 3% of AIDS-related deaths statewide.



- Perinatal transmission rates dropped dramatically from 1993 to 1997 with the introduction and widespread use of antiretrovirals during pregnancy, labor and delivery, and to the baby after birth. In recent years , the perinatal transmission rates have remained fairly stable. However, the number of HIV-infected babies will continue to increase as the number of babies born to HIV-infected mothers rises due to growing numbers of women living with HIV.



- As of May 2002, 151 HIV-infected women were reported to have given birth in 2001 statewide; 13 of these women resided in Regions III, IV and V. While 94% of the HIV-infected women giving birth statewide received AZT in 2001, all of the HIV-infected pregnant women received AZT in Regions III, IV, and V.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Interpretation of HIV Detection Data

Because antiretroviral treatment regimens are initiated earlier in the course of HIV infection than previous treatments, effective therapies postpone and/or prevent the onset of AIDS, resulting in a decrease in AIDS incidence. Consequently, recent incident AIDS data can no longer provide the basis of HIV transmission estimates and trends, and the dissemination of surveillance data has moved toward placing heavier emphasis on the representation of HIV-positive persons. Throughout this report, all AIDS data are depicted by characteristics at year of AIDS diagnosis under the 1993 AIDS case definition, whereas HIV data are characterized at year of HIV detection (earliest positive test reported to the health department).

HIV detection data are not without limitations. Although HIV detection is usually closer in time to HIV infection than is an AIDS diagnosis, data represented by the time of HIV detection must be interpreted with caution. Unlike AIDS data where the date of diagnosis is relatively precise for monitoring AIDS incidence, HIV detection trends do not accurately depict HIV transmission trends. This is because HIV detection data represent cases who were reported after a positive result from a confidential HIV test, which may first occur several years after HIV infection. In addition, the data are under detected and under reported because only persons with HIV who choose to be tested confidentially are counted. HIV detection counts do not include persons who have not been tested for HIV and persons who only have been tested anonymously.

Therefore, HIV detection data do not necessarily represent characteristics of persons who have been recently infected with HIV, nor do they provide true HIV incidence. Demographic and geographic subpopulations are disproportionately sensitive to differences and changes in access to health care, HIV testing patterns, and targeted prevention programs and services. All of these issues must be carefully considered when interpreting HIV data.

Definitions of the Exposure Categories

For the purposes of this report, HIV/AIDS cases are classified into one of several hierarchical exposure (risk) categories, based on information collected. Persons with more than one reported mode of exposure to HIV are assigned to the category listed first in the hierarchy. Definitions are as follows:

- **Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)**: Cases include men who report sexual contact with other men, i.e. homosexual contact or bisexual contact.
- **Injection Drug User (IDU)**: Cases who report using drugs that require injection - not other route of administration of illicit drug use at any time since 1978.
- **High-Risk Heterosexual Contact (HRH)**: Cases who report specific heterosexual contact with a person who has HIV or is at increased risk for HIV infection, e.g. heterosexual contact with a homosexual or bisexual man, heterosexual contact with an injection drug user, or heterosexual contact with a person known to be HIV-infected.
- **Hemophilia/Transfusion/Transplant (Hemo/Transf)**: Cases who report receiving a transfusion of blood or blood products prior to 1985.
- **Perinatal**: HIV infection in children resulting from transmission from an HIV+ mother to her child.

- **Unspecified**: Cases who, at the time of this publication, have no reported history of exposure to HIV through any of the routes listed in the hierarchy of exposure categories. These cases represent logistical issues of surveillance and do not imply that modes of transmission other than sexual, blood, and perinatal are suspected. "Unspecified" cases include: persons for which the surveillance protocols to document the risk behavior information have not yet been completed and are still under investigation; persons whose exposure history is incomplete because they have died, declined risk disclosure, or were lost to follow-up; persons who deny any risk behavior; and persons who do not know the HIV infection status or risk behaviors of their sexual partners.

Case Definition Changes

The CDC AIDS case definition has changed over time based on knowledge of HIV disease and physician practice patterns. The original definition was modified in 1985[1]. The 1987 definition[2] revisions incorporated a broader range of AIDS opportunistic infections and conditions and used HIV diagnostic tests to improve the sensitivity and specificity of the definition. In 1993, the definition was expanded[3] to include HIV-infected individuals with pulmonary tuberculosis, recurrent pneumonia, invasive cervical cancer, or CD4 T-lymphocyte counts of less than 200 cells per ml or a $CD4^+$ percentage of less than 14. A result of the 1993 definition expansion caused HIV-infected persons to be classified as AIDS earlier in their course of disease than under the previous definition. Regardless of the year, AIDS data are tabulated in this report by the date of the first AIDS defining condition in an individual under the 1993 case definition.

The case definition for HIV infection was revised in 1999[4] to include positive results or reports of detectable quantities of HIV virologic (nonantibody) tests. The revisions to the 1993 surveillance definition of HIV include additional laboratory evidence, specifically detectable quantities from virologic tests. The perinatal case definition for infection and seroreversion among children less than 18 months of age who are perinatally exposed to HIV has been changed to incorporate the recent clinical guidelines and the sensitivity and specificity of current HIV diagnostic tests in order to more efficiently classify HIV-exposed children as infected or non-infected.

Adjustment and Estimation Techniques

The period of time between when a case is diagnosed and when it is reported (reporting delay) causes distortions in trends for recently diagnosed cases. Reporting delays were estimated using a maximum likelihood procedure, taking into account possible differences in reporting delays among exposure, geographic, ethnic, age, and gender categories. The estimated number of cases that will be reported are presented as "expected" cases. Adjustment programming was developed by CDC (HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, 1994; 6(2): 37-38).

Recently reported cases, especially HIV (non-AIDS) cases, are more likely to be reported without a specified risk (exposure), thereby causing a distorting decrease among trends in exposure categories. Thus, proportions and graphic representation of trends among risk groups use estimated cases based on risk redistribution. This redistribution is based on preliminary national sex-and race- specific exposure classification distributions of previously unspecified HIV cases in the southern states. These redistribution parameters are similar to those based on national AIDS cases diagnosed prior to 1993 as well as those based on the distribution of specified cases in Louisiana.

[1] MMWR 1985; 34: 373-75.
[2] MMWR 1987; 36 [Supp no.1S]: 1S-15S.
[3] MMWR 1992; 41[RR-17]: 1-19.
[4] CDC 1999; 48[RR13]; 1-27.